

# La Vigna

VOLUME IX NO. 2

SUMMER ISSUE

JULY 1992

## CHIANESE NEWS



Kimberly A. Chianese, daughter of Gary and Rose Chianese and granddaughter of Leo and Louise Chianese and Mario and Josephine Innocenzi, graduated cum laude from the University of Delaware in May 1992. Kimberly earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Biology and she also minored in Chemistry. At the University of Delaware she was a Teaching Assistant in Biology, a member of the University Tour Guides, and vice president of

Golden Key National Honor Society. Kimberly received a University Scholarship and stipend from Thomas Jefferson University and will begin her graduate program in Microbiology in Sept. 1992.

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Craig A. Chianese, son of Robert and Susan Chianese and grandson of Leo & Louise Chianese and William & Mildred Wood received an Associate in Arts Degree from Mercer County Community College in June 1992. He majored in Music.

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Dennis A. Chianese and Ellen Beth Middleton were recently married in a church ceremony at St. John's RC Church in Allentown NJ. The wedding was officiated by a long-time friend of the family, Father Anthony Stringile of Incarnation Parish in Ewing Township. Dennis is the son of Leo and Louise Chianese and Ellen Beth is the daughter of Charles Middleton of Point Pleasant NJ.



## ARMENTI-DUMBAUD WEDDING

On May 16 Marea Ann Armenti and Ted Dumbauld were married in an outdoor ceremony at the beautiful Armenti home. The light rain caused no delay for the father of the bride, Nick Armenti, who escorted Marea to the canopy-covered chapel, where the waiting Ted Dumbauld accepted Marea's hand. The service was officiated by a friend of the family, Rev. Monsignor Edward F. Fleming. Loren Armenti was maid of honor. Marea's cousins Cristina and Cheri Candelori and Celeste Armenti were bridesmaids as well as Kathy Dumbauld and Elizabeth Kelly.

Love was rampant as siblings, cousins and friends caught up on family news, reminisced, danced and ate the elegant fare. It was a treat to hear Bob Candelori sing to the bride and groom. Nick and Marie, you did a wonderful job!

## CAROLYN IMMORDINO MacLEOD

Carolyn Immordino MacLeod, daughter of Jennie and Bob Immordino, has received a Masters of Arts degree in Education from Fairfield University in Connecticut. Carolyn, who is the computer coordinator of Kent Center School in Kent CT, majored in Computer Education.

For her thesis Carolyn wrote a Hypercard computer program entitled "Research/Writing in 8 Basic Steps" for students in grades 7-12 using Macintosh computers. Students in Carolyn's 7th & 8th grade classes tested the program as it was being created, providing feedback and support. The program will be used by 6 other schools in the school district.

Carolyn lives with her husband Jim and their daughters Carrie and Jaime in Kent CT where Jim teaches at the Kent School.

Carolyn would love to hear from anyone in the LaVigna audience who has written a Hypercard program. Her address is: Kent School Box 2007, Kent CT 06757.

## THE BEST IS IN ITALY

"The best early childhood programs in the world," reported Newsweek in December 1991. "Where?" I wondered. In Reggio Emilia, a small town in northern Italy. "Those Italians," I thought. "They did it again!"

At the end of June my director and I traveled to the University of New Hampshire to attend an Early Childhood Institute to learn more about Reggio Emilia. We had been fortunate at Bing Nursery School, Stanford University's lab school, to have an in-service this past May about these remarkable schools in Reggio Emilia, located near Bologna, a city that contributes 12% of its budget to the operation of the schools. They have become internationally known for the incredible quality and depth of creativity expressed by the children ages 2-6 years. How have they been able to achieve this? I went east to New Hampshire to find out--and to consider what implications it had for American education



## THE BEST IS IN ITALY (Continued from page 1)

The E.C.E. Institute was an intensive 1 week experience attended by educators, administrators and parents from all over the country. I was especially moved by the number of primary school teachers who were there to seek out changes for their standard educational methods.

It would be difficult to summarize five days of inspiration here. Attending this conference convinced me about the power of dialogue and collaboration. In Reggio Emilia there exists a commitment to collaboration between the educators, parents, and city itself--that is a key to their success. They have been caring and working together for more than 30 years on behalf of their young children. The results are clearly demonstrated in the children's paintings, drawings, clay structures, and dramatic arts. The teachers have been able to keep detailed records of the children's conversations and have captured their play in photographs and video. Americans find the sophistication and detail of the Italian children's work to be astounding. "When young children explore, you Americans stop them too soon," the Italians told us. "You are always in a hurry..."

The last session centered on the Italian family system and the value of community for young children. Half way through the morning I turned to look through the audience, and felt deeply proud to see my own parents there--caring about me and this "new" educational process--there as a confirmation of the speaker's words about family...In fact my own family is my primary community. It was all a most memorable experience.

Roberta Immordino

## FROM LILIA CHIANESE SCISCIO

I came across this poem in a recent edition of "Mothering" magazine. It is a beautiful one and I wanted to share it with all of you. I want you to know that there is little spare time in my life these days with the care of my two small ones, but I always treasure receiving the paper, and always, if not immediately, find time to read it. I enjoy it dearly; it touches me in a way unlike any other thing in my life. Roots, you know.

I hope the enclosed small contribution will help. Love to everyone.

DARNING THE WORLD

Opening my mother's sewing box,  
of inlaid wood, from Germany,  
makes me infinitely sad.  
It happens each time:  
the small familiar tools,  
the same ones she handled,  
speak of her in thimble-and-thread language  
in accents of wartime wartime wartime,  
lost buttons, torn hems, severed arms.

And tonight is the night,  
The sock will be darned.  
The proper needle, the correct thread color falls into my nimble hands.  
It goes well for once, the darning.  
The hole yields to surgery, closes stitch by stitch,  
Smoothly, without a lump to cause discomfort.  
Does my mother's spirit preside?  
It makes me infinitely sad,  
for in that sewing box nestle all women,  
darning, tending the small mendings for daughters,  
for sons, for mates they're missing, for those  
who've been missed and will be missed and missing forever  
the world over and over again and darning still, in peace  
and war and peace, repairing the world, pulling it together,  
thread by thread, repiecing it, with love and devotion.

The world needs a good darning.  
The heart of the world needs the sewing box of women  
to close the wound, pull one side to the other,

## CORINNE ALICE BILANCIO

On July 25, 1992, Corinne is marrying Peter Schoning. As you know, Corinne was our long-time editor until her departure to Copenhagen about a year ago. The "American Wedding" is being held in Wyndham at Bryn Mawr College, Corinne's alma mater.

We all want to thank Lewis Bilancio, her father, Gloria Bilancio, her mother, and Bernice Smailer for helping Corinne become the fine young woman she is today, as well as all her aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

Corinne, you're on the right path. Keep up the good work. Enjoy life. Love greatly.

As the world seems to get smaller and smaller, we must all remember our dreams and continue to pursue them. The following is Corinne's valedictorian address--1977--it rings as true today as it did 15 short years ago.

## "TO DREAM THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM"

Corinne Bilancio  
Valedictory Address  
June, 1977

Dr. Kalapos, Mr. Holland, members of the Board of Education, administrators, faculty, parents, and friends

Now that we are ending high school, a future stretches before us. None of us knows what will happen, but we all have dreams -- small dreams and big dreams.

There are also impossible dreams -- the ideals that may never be completely attained; the stars that we may never touch, yet in aiming toward them and approaching them, we give life true significance.

We, the world's youth, are also the world's idealists. We think of the great contributions that we can make to society and the great changes we can make in the world -- under our direction the world will be just, peaceful, and beautiful.

Perhaps many of you are thinking that when we learn more about the world, we will become realistic, that is, we will realize the impossibility of these dreams.

I hope that the realism that accompanies growing older and gaining experience does not mean we will compromise, and finally surrender our ideals. Too often, in dealing with the world as it is, people forget what the world could be.

Soon, we will be part of a world that is far from the ideal. But, in coping with it, we must not abandon our own ideals.

Crime is committed in the name of law and order; unfairness in the name of justice; greed in the name of pursuit of happiness. Is this a reality we must accept?

No, it is not, and I hope that we will never accept it. No matter how deeply certain evils are embedded in the habits of the world, we must not tolerate them. No matter how long injustice has prevailed, we must not let it remain. No matter how profitable exploitation may be, we must not let it continue.

A world without crime and injustice may be an impossible dream. Yet, in 1491 America was an impossible dream. When some of you were graduating from high school, travel to the moon was an impossible dream. At one time, public education was an impossible dream.

And just as these impossible dreams came true, so may some of ours. Someday we may live in a world without tyranny, without poverty, without war.

Sometimes, like a star in the sky, such a world seems unreachable. But, like a star, the path to it is not infinite.

We should not think of the impossibility of our dreams, when so many have come true. Instead, we should take each step toward these goals with courage and determination, even if at times our star may flicker out of sight. For we must reach for the unreachable star, no matter how hopeless, no matter how far.

Glassboro High School  
Glassboro, New Jersey



## "A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM"

In the fall of 1978 I was staying for a few days at the home of Lynn Harris, Bernice's daughter, in Berkeley, CA, not far from the University. It was a beautiful Monday so I decided to visit it. Lynn warned me about muggings--"Even during the daytime," she said. But the campus beckoned. I had heard so much about it, so I picked up a main road to it and proceeded to climb, the University being on a hill/plateau.

The closer I got, the more graffiti on the walls, poles, benches, even on the pavement. Notable was a U.S. mailbox decorated with graffiti with an empty beer bottle on top. A common theme was a shiny spray-painted lavender floral signature--pretty but illegible.

A few blocks before the campus on the left side of the avenue was an employment office, closed for Labor Day. The two glass doors were shut but there was a half-inch opening between the doors and you could feel the air conditioning streaming out. Posted on the left door was a typewritten sign: "Please do not bring any applications, letters, notices or communications to this office. They should be mailed to..." an address in Sacramento. On the right door was a similar sign in Spanish. Lying within a semicircle inside beneath the opening was a layer of letters, notes, postcards and miscellaneous communications. So I reread the sign and scrutinized the situation, hoping to derive some meaningful conclusion.

A roar--and a fancy motorcycle drove up with two young black men on board. The cycle was painted bright lavender. The riders were dressed in bright lavender leather (plastic?) pants, with matching lavender windbreakers, helmet and gloves. They wore large lavender-tinted wrap-around glasses.

The back-seat passenger dismounted and approached the glass doors. "Good morning," he said, and "Good morning," I replied. He took a couple of envelopes from his pocket, inserted them between the doors and flicked them to the outer fringes of the week-end accumulation of notices on the carpet. Smiling, I said, What about the sign on the door?"

"Who can read?" he replied, laughing as he remounted the cycle.

For a moment I was deeply perplexed. Here was an illiterate mailing letters without stamps through locked doors because he couldn't read.

"But this is illegal," I thought. "Education is compulsory. You have to learn to read so you can obey that sign, so you can pay your income taxes, so you can read all the law prohibiting this and that, so you can be eligible for the armed forces, and have the opportunity to kill the enemy in Africa, Europe, Korea, Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, Iraq..."

These thoughts were never communicated, however, for there was a flash of lavender and the horsemen melted into the moving traffic, both laughing. And the rear rider blew me a kiss. I envied them. They might have been illiterate--but fools they were not.

Leu Bilancio.

## G.I. LEW IN THE QUESTURA

A questura is a police station. The holding cell was a long bare room, with a concrete bunker six feet wide along the wall. This was our bed. Above the bunker were several barred windows overlooking the courtyard. We were each given a blanket, and slept with our clothes on since it was the cold, wet season and the prison was not heated.

After curfew soldiers in various stages of inebriation were brought in. Several had been my cell mates previously when I was caught in Naples without a pass, and we embraced and shook hands like soul brothers. This was how they celebrated their weekends. All soldiers received their pay very conveniently on Friday, then went to the P.X. and picked up their ration of cigarettes. With cigarettes in hand wine, women and song were at their disposal (rather less of song). On Sunday night the soldiers were picked up by the MPs, chauffeured to the questura, and in the morning after breakfast picked up by their sergeants and returned to their units. The soldiers had a ball, the sergeants were happy to have an excuse to drive into town, and the ones who suffered were the MPs. the



LA VIGNA PICNIC - JULY 19, 1992  
11:00 to 2:30 A.M.



It was a day to remember! A circle of Love that included approximately 100 family members and friends. Even the sun blessed us with its presence

Each generation was represented and it was wonderful seeing: All of the beautiful children having such a great time creating tomorrow's memories-

The young people vigorously playing volley ball and soft ball aiming to win...and Winners they were - bonding together with their siblings, cousins and friends.

There were those of us who sang, talked, joked and laughed together. We played bocce and quoits. We even attempted unsuccessfully to cheat - an old family tradition. And we watched the family videos. (last years picnic, Ivan & Gloria's Wedding, etc.)

It was William Bilancio's 25th Birthday. We received pins in honor of this event and we sang "Happy Birthday" as a cake was presented. Again, Happy Birthday, William..we wish you the best!

The food at this picnic was superb and unbelievable. (Twenty or more entrees and 12 deserts to choose-what a display.) This year, we are giving honorable mention to Joseph Gervasio for creating the most scumptuous and delicious dish...."Gervasio's Timballo Di Melanzane" Gervasio's Baked Eggplant with cheese and prosciutto. In the future, we will publish this recipe. For artistic talent, we want to mention Sandy & Donnie's Ham Platter. And we want to thank all of you for the wonderful food you brought to share with us all!

Beatrice Johnson won the 50/50.

Angelo Chianese guessed that the watermelon weighed 26 lbs.8 ounces. It weighed 26 lbs.10 ounces. Wow!

Paul Ruoccio won the Bean Contest. He guessed 1,250 beans. The jar contained 1,264 beans.

Again, we want to thank Clara and Dean Acquaviva for allowing us to have our LaVigna Family Picnic at 90 Eggerts Road. It took a lot of hard work and to the two of them and all of their helpers..we thank you!!

For those that were not able to attend, we truly missed you! Please try to make it next year.. We want to see you all!!

When the day was done and darkness was setting in, I sat next to my brother, Lew. I am sure throughout the day his thoughts drifted back through the 50 years that we have been having picnics and family events at 90 Eggerts Road. Hadn't I periodically reminisced? It seemed like yesterday-Uncle Al and his kids, Zi'Assunta, Uncle Joe, Ann, Aunt Antonette, Erminia, Nick, Ange, Jack, Dorothy, Leo, Pop, & ROSE & LOU!!! We knew that they were there in spirit....in our circle of LOVE.

Lew looked at me and he said, " You know these kids are doing a GOOD JOB carrying on!" And I, with a tear in my eye, nodded and agreed!

See you next year.....



Lorraine Anthony

## STOP SMOKING!

The following article accompanied Art Bilancio's contribution.

Good morning, relatives, friends and readers of La Vigna I am sorry that I was absent for a few years, but I am back. I was a heavy smoker of cigarettes and cigars. I stopped smoking 26 February 1981 in the evening at about 7:45. That was when I finished the last cigarette in the pack. I promised to remember the date because it was a happy and important decision that I made. I was addicted to tobacco smoking. My decision was so that I did not miss the smoking a few days after. If you want to stop smoking, make a strong decision so you also will not miss the habit of smoking. When I used to smoke I read all the articles that I saw about smoking 30 or 35 years ago. At that time I was living in Trenton NJ at 342 South Olden Avenue, Founder and builder of the Greenwood Flower Shop. At that time I was a member of the Neapolitan Club at 112 Butler Street; I was a member of Florists Transworld Delivery, an organization of florists that has members all over the world that deliver flowers to relatives and friends for any occasion. I kept the store open until 9 p.m. weekdays, Sundays until 2 p.m. After I closed the store in the evening for relaxation, I went to the Neapolitan Club to see friends.

One evening at about the fall of 1958 in the Neapolitan Hall we were talking about smoking with Antonio Pedata, a tailor, President of the Club; he lived at 52 Butler Street and worked in a clothing store by the name of Jayhose on South Broad across from the Court House, and Giuseppe Marrazzo, foreman at Roebling in Roebling NJ, who lived on Chamber Street, and who was the financial secretary at that time of the Neapolitan Hall. I said that in a few years there would be a Tobacco Act. (In a few years on each pack of cigarettes will be marked smoking is no good for your health.) Both of them said I made a mistake...the tobacco companies are very rich and would never allow it. They did not know. 15 or 20 years later, the Tobacco Act came. After a few more years I decided that I should go to Florida to a warmer climate for the winter. To protect me from the damaged lungs that the smoking had done to me.

Next, my experience in Florida.

Arrivederci, from Art

## G.I. LEW IN THE QUESTURA (Continued from Page 4)

But I didn't suffer long--for sitting on the bunker watching the soldiers being pushed through the steel barred door was the best show in town.

We had been frisked, our pockets emptied and their contents sealed in envelopes which were returned to us upon our release. From my perch I could see how pocket-dependent some soldiers were: they felt naked with empty pockets. What they missed most were cigarettes--they would beg for one, but we had all been cleaned out.

A soldier named Mike was brought in crying. The MPs had separated him from his girlfriend Lina before he had a chance to write down her address or establish a rendezvous. All night long he would wake up, remember that he couldn't remember her address, and cry himself back to sleep.

Some of the soldiers weren't drunk at all. They played drunk so they could have an excuse for missing curfew. If they had been caught breaking curfew while sober, they would have been court martialed. In addition, they were now provided with transportation, lodging and breakfast.

Some went to extremes. They would let the MPs carry them in and lay them on the floor. Then as soon as the MPs had disappeared into the guard room, they would jump up and embrace their weekend jail friends, while we, the bunker balcony audience, clapped. The MPs of course were aware of the charade. They tried to enjoy life in other ways.

One, however, was really drunk. He rambled on and on about an S.O.B. captain who was giving him a hard time. The first thing he was going to do when he returned to civilian life was to go get that %&\*%# S.O.B. captain. So some of us made him believe that while he was drunk he had killed his captain. The soldier really

(Continued on page 7.)



believed it, and was frightened nearly to death about his coming court martial. On Monday morning when his sergeant came to bring him back to his unit, he had a hard time convincing him that he had not killed anyone. As they left, the soldier suddenly stopped and said, "You mean that S.O.B. captain is still alive?" The sergeant had to drag him out.

A G.I. was brought in by two MPs who pushed him through the door, dumped him on the floor and threw a blanket on him. He looked like he had been sleeping in the gutter--a Neapolitan gutter. But what struck our attention were his boots. They were shiny-part out and polished. Our boots had the shiny part inside so they didn't need polishing.

We were all more or less sleeping with our heads against the wall and our boots sticking out along the lower edge of the sloping bunker. As the soldier picked himself up, he was faced with a row of boots. These interested him. He started to evaluate each pair and their tenants one by one. Just as a palmist can tell you so much from the lines on your hand, this soldier would carefully examine each boot and describe the past, present and future of each owner. It was evident he knew boots and people. He was a drunken philosopher--a fortune-teller.

After he sobered up he turned out to be one of the most interesting people I have ever met. He was from Connecticut, where his family had worked in a shoe factory for many years. When the factory closed down, he became a shoe salesman. He was looking forward to using the G.I. bill to go to college.

He really believed in shoes. They are our interface with mother earth, he said. You could really tell what kind of soul one has by his sole. I tried to remember his name until I could get to a pencil and paper.

One curfew-breaking character was a sailor. At the entrance when he saw soldiers in the cell, he drew back and told the guards that sailors were entitled to go to the brig with other sailors, and not to be mixed with soldiers. The guards laughed at him, pushed him beyond the door and locked it behind him. The sailor sat brooding in the corner of the bunker for a while, then when the guard showed up again, he demanded to go to the head.

"Latrine call is in the morning," said the guard. "Well, I'll do it on the floor," the sailor threatened. "Go right ahead," the guard responded. The sailor unbuttoned his fly, moved to the door and aimed his weapon through the bars into the corridor.

The guard was not sure of his authority over sailors, and was in the middle of a poker game so he pulled out his keys, opened the door and escorted the sailor to the latrine.

On his return the sailor said, "I need another blanket. Sailors get two blankets."

"One blanket each," said the guard. One could tell that the sergeant had had it. He slammed the cell door, locked it, and even closed the guard room door, which was always left half open.

The sailor contemplated a moment then he stepped up on the bunker to one of the barred windows, He put his index fingers into his mouth in the shape of a V and the courtyard resounded with a series of shrill whistles that must have awakened people a block away.

It wasn't long before the sleepy officer in charge of quarters showed up. "What the hell is going on?" he asked.

The sailor explained that he did not have a jacket like the soldiers had. He was dressed in the tight-fitting white sailor uniform.

"Give the sailor another blanket," ordered the officer, and hurried away to resume his sleep.

My cell mates were awake by this time, and impressed by this display of naval power. When the MPs had frisked the sailor, they had missed the cuffs on his pants because they were on the inside. The sailor put his fingers into his cuffs and came up with a cigarette and a pack of safety matches. The soldiers who were dying for a smoke rushed to the sailor. There was a moment of suspense as the first of only two matches lost its head, but the second one did the trick. The cigarette was passed around in a circle, one puff each. No cigarette was ever more ecstatically received. And if the officer in charge of quarters was worried about the sailor alone and ostracized in the corner of the holding cell, that was quickly changed to puzzlement as from the courtyard below came the cheer, "N-A-V-Y, Navy! Navy! Hip, Hip, Hooray!"



OPEN LETTER TO LA VIGNA READERS

I would love to see a picture of my mother, Jennie Bilancio Immordino, as a child or young girl.

If any of you have photographs showing any of the Bilancio children--Lewis, Rose, Jennie, Sylvia, Leo, Lorraine--as children, please contact me. I have never seen group photos or individual portraits of the first four children and can only assume none were taken OR someone out there has them.

Can anyone help me with my search?

CAROLYN IMMORDINO MacLEOD  
Kent School  
Kent, CT 06757  
(203)927-3993

GI LEW IN THE QUESTURA (Continued from page 7)

Then there was silence, but not for long. From across the courtyard, from the holding cell for women there came a call: "Mikeeee!"

Mike couldn't believe his ears. First he looked at his fellow cell mates to see if they had heard the same thing he had. They had! So he stood up on the bunker and answered "Lisa! Lisa!"

For a moment I thought I would be drafted to be the translator go-between. It wouldn't have been the first time. However, the Italian women had learned the necessary English.

"Bring tooo 'cess che fede," (this phrase which means stinky toilet in Neapolitan was the closest they could pronounce Chesterfield cigarettes) shouted Lisa. "Frydee, P.X." she concluded.

Mike was very happy--but not ecstatic: the first time it had cost only one pack. Other soldiers soon got into the act, and got dated up for next "Frydee, P.X." with Maria, Rosina, even with a Madonna.

Then Mike got the hiccups. This brought on a torrent of obscene and unusual remedies. He was told where to put his fingers--no, his thumb--and wiggle it. All to no avail. Then a soldier told Mike what Lina should do to cure his hiccups. This made Mike very angry--then everyone laughed for he had lost his hiccups.

I was ignored during the weekend. Important people didn't work on Saturdays or Sundays. It was a frustrating time. How could I explain my absence upon my return to my unit? On Monday morning the sergeants came and one by one the soldiers were taken back to their units. Most of them were sad that the weekend was over. They had developed a hard-to-describe camaraderie in prison. There was a frank honesty, and everything was for laughs. There in jail there was no way they could get into a fight because insults were words of endearment. Creative profanity was in, hypocrisy and flattery were out. The soldiers did not censor their language. They talked freely. Monday morning that freedom ended--back to hard labor.

On Tuesday morning I was led into a room where there were some C.I.C. (Counter Intelligence Corps) officers. A man in civilian clothes talked to me in German, mentioning the word Battipaglia several times. I explained to him that although I could read technical railroad German, I could neither talk nor understand spoken German.

Then I brought to their attention that all the documents were marked either University of Illinois or ASTP (Army Special Training Program). They released me as if they were doing me a great favor. "No," they would not return my research materials until the end of the war--the documents were all stamped SECRET. No, they wouldn't give me a receipt, it was not policy--but they assured me my papers would be returned.

No, they would not give me a release, nor a letter explaining how I happened to become AWOL for my Commanding Officer. They refused, saying, "have him call us."

I returned to Francolise expecting the worst, even fearful that I might be busted. But instead I found the opposite. Not only did I not lose my stripes, but my respect was enhanced. My fellow soldiers already knew of Army snafus (situation normal all fucked up). Some could even top my story. The incarceration as a German spy increased my status and created a mystique which made life there more bearable.



Thanks to the following for  
their contributions to LA VIGNA:

Mr. & Mrs. Spillers  
Mr. & Mrs. Newcomb  
Beatrice Johnson  
Mr. & Mrs. Soda  
Louise & Leo Chianese  
Mr. and Mrs. Schoening  
John Anthony

Get well wishes to Phyllis Innocenzi.  
We missed you and Aunt Jennie at the picnic.  
\* \* \* \* \*  
Next LA VIGNA meeting: Saturday, September  
5th, 1992, at 90 Eggerts Crossing Road,  
Lawrenceville NJ. Any questions, call  
Clora at 609)882-2448.  
Deadline for articles in the Autumn Issue:  
September 5, 1992.

## "ANCIENT EDUCATION"

In some private chamber of the heart the walls are covered with personal hieroglyphics depicting the first hours and days of one's parenthood. Though the story is full of intimate details, we should not dismiss the experience as something purely subjective. The birth of a child works a transformation in every mother, every father, unleashing the most potent force in nature.

We step out of the hospital, carrying our little bundle of helplessness, into the glare of the twentieth century. New parents have special access to the reservoir of human emotions. Their hope is as vast as the sky while their compassion is as deep as the sea.

But the tasks of parenthood are arduous, and at times we seem barely equipped. We call upon Grandma Phillips, Aunt Sarah, Uncle Sam and the day care center. Each does their little bit. Ultimately, though, mom and dad are the humble carpenters, putting together - plank by plank - the solid stage of the future, upon which their children will dance.

The bundle, meanwhile, is anything but helpless. Infant senses, though seemingly half asleep, are actually probing the environment, selecting targets. Infant muscles, apparently weak and uncoordinated, quietly prepare for world conquest. Growing into a lean and hungry toddler, the child soon turns the adult world inside out. Does anyone insist on using the word "helpless"? Try "relentless".

In this country's youth, Ellis Island teemed with immigrants who eventually shaped the national destiny. Children, too, arrive, practicing foreign customs, on the shores of our lives and take command of the future. And though we may believe that refugees and children alike require the basics of food, clothing and shelter, in fact they yearn for work and dignity and independence.

Leaders of the next century, who can maneuver boldly through a maze of complexity, are fashioning themselves today. Parents and teachers may give every possible assistance, but the job of Herculean proportions is the child's alone. He is his own masterpiece.

Teachers are a rare sort of bird, are they not? Who would actually choose to stay with toddlers or preschoolers year after year? It's definitely unnatural. And yet they persist in this most frustrating, most satisfying profession.

A good teacher is like a farmer. He works with natural elements like manure. And sunshine. And rain. He has some notion of the ideal conditions for growth but reality is full of fickle weather, drought and pests. Above all else, he has hope. Faith alone allows him to see a healthy crop in full bloom where others see only barren ground.

The teacher does not deal with children in isolation, but is indeed most pleased when the parent-child bond of love, respect and appreciation grows ever deeper. In this respect, the teacher resembles an archaeologist of sorts who leads the family back to a distant time - back to that quiet chamber covered with pictures so vivid that the paint seems still wet to the touch.

D. Garcia



# CONGRATULATIONS.

Corinne  
+  
Peter

JULY 25, 1992



DA VIGNA  
10 EGGERTS CROSSING ROAD  
LAWRENCEVILLE NJ 08648